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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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ARIZONA'S TESTING PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE USDOE – ARIZONA ONE OF TEN STATES APPROVED; 40 ARE REJECTED

PHOENIX (Thursday, August 3, 2006) -- Arizona is one of only ten states receiving approval from the United States Department of Education (USDOE) for the state's testing system. (This is unrelated to the ELL dispute with the Federal Government). This approval is an important No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirement and is based on input from peer reviewers external to the USDOE. Some of the 10 states (including Arizona) received approval with recommendations. The 40 states that have not received approval from the Feds face possible financial sanctions.

Horne stated: "This is a major accomplishment for the Department to have USDOE approval of the state's testing program. We have worked extremely hard to align the tests to the states standards for each grade level. Arizona's testing system is designed by Arizona teachers and is a valid and reliable tool for measuring academic proficiency."

The USDOE also concluded that the state's assessment system for measuring reading, writing and mathematics assessments in each of grades 3-8 and high school, as well as the alternate assessment and accommodations for both these subject meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.

States that received full approval and approval with recommendations are the following: Maryland, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia, Delaware, Indiana, North Carolina, South Carolina and Utah.

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